



**You should keep these notes and make them available to everyone who uses the trade plates.**

This is a brief guide. For more detailed information please refer to the following:

- the Vehicle Excise and Registration Act 1994 (VERA)
- the Road Vehicles (Registration and Licensing) Regulations 2002 (RV(R&L) (Regs) (S1 2002 No. 2742).

You can get these from the Stationery Office Publications Centre website: [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk)

## 1. Issue of trade licences

**Please note:** there is no automatic right to get a trade licence. Only those that can fully comply with the specified criteria will be eligible to become a trade licence holder. To be eligible to apply for a trade licence you must either be a motor dealer, a motor trader or a vehicle tester.

**A motor dealer** is defined as a person in the business of selling or supplying vehicles, that is a new or used car dealer.

**A motor trader** is defined as:

- a manufacturer or repairer of vehicles
- a dealer whose business consists of collecting and delivering vehicles and no other activities except as a vehicle manufacturer or repairer.

**A vehicle tester** is defined as a person who tests vehicles belonging to someone else.

## 2. How to fill in the application for a trade licence (VTL301)

- You **must** fill in all sections.
- You **must** sign and date the application form.
- Please make sure you enclose the correct fee. Any damaged, altered or post-dated cheques will not be accepted and your application will be rejected.

To support your application you will need to provide: a copy of your motor trade insurance certificate to match the name on the application. Please do not send the original certificate as we cannot return it.

If you cannot provide this, please tell us why and provide details of your Companies House registration number.

**We will reject your application if you do not provide the requested information or if you have not enclosed the fee.**

## 3. Permitted uses for trade plates

**You must only use trade plates for the particular business purposes for which we issued them.**

**These include:**

- for its test or trial or the test or trial of its accessories or equipment, in either case in the ordinary course of construction, modification or repair or after completion
- for proceeding to or from a public weighbridge for ascertaining its weight or to or from any place for its registration or inspection by a person acting on behalf of the Secretary of State

- for its test or trial for the benefit of a prospective purchaser, for proceeding at the instance of a prospective purchaser to any place for the purpose of such test or trial, or for returning after such test or trial
- for its test or trial for the benefit of a person interested in promoting publicity in regard to it, for proceeding at the instance of such a person to any place for the purpose of such test or trial, or for returning after such test or trial
- for delivering it to the place where the purchaser intends to keep it
- for demonstrating its operation or the operation of its accessories or equipment when it is being handed over to the purchaser
- for delivering it from one part of the licence holder's premises to another part of his premises, or for delivering it from his premises to premises of, or between parts of premises of, another manufacturer or repairer of or dealer in vehicles or removing it from the premises of another manufacturer or repairer of or dealer in vehicles direct to his own premises
- for proceeding to or returning from a workshop in which a body or a special type of equipment or accessory is to be or has been fitted to it or in which it is to be or has been painted, repaired or valeted (this does not apply to a drive-through car wash, or hand car wash business that is open to the public to bring their vehicles for cleaning at any time)
- for proceeding from the premises of a manufacturer or repairer of or dealer in vehicles to a place from which it is to be transported by train, ship or aircraft or for proceeding to the premises of such a manufacturer, repairer or dealer from a place to which it has been so transported
- for proceeding to or returning from any garage, auction room or other place at which vehicles are usually stored or usually or periodically offered for sale and at which it is to be or has been stored or is to be or has been offered for sale as the case may be
- for proceeding to or returning from a place where it is to be or has been inspected or tested
- for proceeding to a place where it is to be broken up or otherwise dismantled
- for collecting vehicles under repossession.

**A motor trader:** trade plates can be used for vehicles in the temporary possession of a business for testing, trialling, demonstrating, delivering, repossessing or dismantling

**A motor trader who is a manufacturer:** a manufacturer of vehicles may use trade plates on vehicles registered to themselves if kept only for research and development purposes.

**A vehicle tester:** trade plates can be used for vehicles submitted to them for testing (including the vehicles trailer, its accessories or equipment).

## 4. Display of trade plates

A trade plate:

- should be displayed in a vertical position
- must be visible and easily readable from a distance between 18 to 22 metre
- can be displayed anywhere on both the front and rear (rear only for motorcycles)
- cannot be displayed inside a vehicle
- must not cover the vehicle's existing number plates (except for motorcycles).

## 5. Offences and penalties

It is an offence to:

- make a false declaration on the application form, or make a false declaration on any supporting material you used to make the application
- display trade plates if a current trade licence has expired
- display trade plates on a vehicle registered to you (unless you are a vehicle manufacturer and the vehicle is used on trade plates for development purposes)
- display trade plates that have been altered, defaced or damaged
- display trade plates on parked vehicles
- display anything on a vehicle that could be mistaken for a trade plate
- display trade plates that were not issued from DVLA
- display trade plates for use on vehicles for any purpose other than specified under the section for permitted uses
- display trade plates on vehicles carrying passengers for hire, reward, commercial or personal basis
- display trade plates for use on vehicles for the general conveyance of goods or burden. Exceptions to specified loads is provided within the regulations
- separate a set of trade plates for use on more than one vehicle
- allow trade plates to be used by another person.

There is a maximum fine of £5,000 for:

- making a false or misleading declaration, or providing false or misleading evidence in an application
- fraudulently altering or using trade plates
- allowing trade plates to be used by another person.

There is a maximum fine of £1,000 or five times the rate of duty chargeable, whichever is the greater for:

- displaying trade plates for a purpose not permitted.

## 6. Rates of duty

You can apply for a:

- 6 or 12 month trade licence in January
- 6 month trade licence in July.

New traders who apply for a trade licence at any time other than January and July would need to obtain a trade licence for a period of 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11 months in order for the licence to end in December or June.

For example a customer making an application in March would need a licence to cover a 10 month period to end in December.

A different rate than that stated below may be applicable if rates of duty change in the Chancellor's Annual Budget.

Month you apply	Month of expiry	All vehicles Rate of duty	Motorcycles and tricycles Rate of duty
January (6 month licence)	June	£90.75	£50.05
January (12 month licence)	December	£165.00	£91.00
February (11 month licence)	December	£165.00	£91.00
March (10 month licence)	December	£151.25	£83.40
April (9 month licence)	December	£136.10	£75.05
May (8 month licence)	December	£121.00	£66.75
June (7 month licence)	December	£105.85	£58.40
July (6 month licence)	December	£90.75	£50.05
August (11 month licence)	June	£165.00	£91.00
September (10 month licence)	June	£151.25	£83.40
October (9 month licence)	June	£136.10	£75.05
November (8 month licence)	June	£121.00	£66.75
December (7 month licence)	June	£105.85	£58.40

## 7. Refunds

You can surrender a trade plate at any time for a refund of the licence duty. You will get a refund for each full calendar month left on the trade licence, only when DVLA receives your application. Your application cannot be backdated. You will need to fill in an 'Application for a refund of tax on surrender of a trade licence' (VTL308) form available from [www.gov.uk/trade-licence-plates](http://www.gov.uk/trade-licence-plates)

## 8. Replacement

If your trade plates are lost, stolen, damaged or destroyed, you must apply for a replacement using the VTL310 application, available from [www.gov.uk/trade-licence-plates](http://www.gov.uk/trade-licence-plates)

## 9. Change of name and address

If you change your name and address details you must tell DVLA by filling in the VTL310 application form available from [www.gov.uk/trade-licence-plates](http://www.gov.uk/trade-licence-plates)

## 10. Data protection

We will send the name and address details you provide on this form to a parcel delivery company. They will process your transaction and, if you have provided a phone number, call when they send your trade plates. If you do not want them to use your phone number, please do not tick the appropriate box on the form. DVLA handles your personal data in accordance with road vehicle law and data protection laws. The law allows us to release your data to the police and other enforcement bodies. We also provide data to other parties where the law allows it. For further information about how we process your data, your rights and who to contact, see our privacy notice at [www.gov.uk/dvla/privacy-policy](http://www.gov.uk/dvla/privacy-policy)

## What happens next

You should receive your licence confirmation and trade plates within four weeks. For security reasons we will send your trade plates and licence confirmation to you in two separate packages. Please allow four weeks before you contact us. You can contact us by phoning 0300 3001495, phone lines are open between 8.30am and 4.30pm on Monday to Friday.